



Information Technology

Program Description

The Office of Information and Technology (OI&T) provides information technology (IT) to support VA in delivering services to our Nation's veterans and their dependents. OI&T supports the improvement of VA's mission performance through business process reengineering and technology integration.

Our goals are to:

- Operate a modern IT environment that supports the delivery of high-quality services to veterans and their families.
- Strategically improve business practices through knowledge-based decision making, collaboration and communication.
- Utilize a One VA Enterprise Architecture to inform, guide, and manage IT systems, programs, and processes.
- Attract, develop, and retain an outstanding, diverse IT workforce.
- Enable and support the VA transformation to veteran-centric delivery of services.
- Support the seamless transition of veterans from military service by providing high-quality health information technology solutions.

Information Technology Summary of Discretionary Appropriation Highlights (dollars in thousands)

| | FY 2005 | FY2006 | FY 2007 |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| Managing Authority | | | |
| Veterans Health Administration | \$863,122 | \$809,569 | \$831,890 |
| Veterans Benefits Administration | \$92,691 | \$59,947 | \$54,833 |
| National Cemetery Administration | \$3,860 | \$4,478 | \$4,314 |
| Office of Management | \$38,333 | \$59,668 | \$69,203 |
| Office of Information and Technology | \$279,501 | \$273,591 | \$290,193 |
| Other Staff Offices | \$6,010 | \$6,567 | \$6,567 |
| Total Budget Authority | \$1,283,517 | \$1,213,820 | \$1,257,000 |
| Total Reimbursements | \$24,000 | \$27,396 | \$25,763 |
| Total Obligations | \$1,307,517 | \$1,241,216 | \$1,282,763 |

Summary of Budget Request

The Department requests \$1.257 billion for non-payroll information technology (IT) project budget authority for FY2007, an increase of \$43.18 million over the FY2006 Congressional appropriation. This request consolidates all non-payroll IT within the Department under one appropriation, with the exception of non-payroll IT for credit reform programs and non-appropriated insurance benefits programs, both of which must be resourced outside the new appropriation. For purposes of comparison, the funding table above displays spending for FY2005 in the same structure being proposed for FY2006 and FY2007. In the sections that follow, each administration or staff IT major investment is discussed. A major investment is defined as requiring an OMB exhibit 300 business case. Additional narrative further detailing the contribution each project makes to achieving the Department's goals and objectives can be found in the individual volumes and chapters for each administration and staff office. While direct management of individual projects is dispersed among the appropriate administrations and staff offices, the funding will be under the control of the Chief Information Officer (CIO) for VA, supported by the staff of the Office of Information and Technology (OI&T). The primary purpose of this consolidation of resources is to improve the oversight of the Department's IT portfolio.

Health IT

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has had automated information systems in all of its medical facilities since 1985. Today, the Veterans Health Information Systems and Technology Architecture (VistA) and the Computerized Patient Record System (CPRS) application for clinicians are recognized by health care and information technology leaders as the most comprehensive electronic health record (EHR) in use anywhere. VistA enables clinicians to enter progress notes, vital signs, and orders, and to instantly find, organize, and analyze a patient's complete medical record. Through VistA Imaging, clinicians can view x-rays, endoscopies, wound photos, and other medical images as soon as they become available. The Bar Code Medication Administration system (BCMA) helps ensure that each patient receives the correct medication, in the correct dose, at the correct time. Clinical reminders, drug-drug alerts, and drug-allergy alerts help clinicians provide safer, more effective, and more efficient care. VA and DOD have put into service the secure transfer of protected health information through the Federal Health Information Exchange project.

With its My Health_eVet personal health record system, VA is now at the forefront of the new movement toward person-centered care. My Health_eVet enables veterans to track their own health, record their military history, share their records with non-VA clinicians or family members, and order prescription refills on line. Additional

features under development will further strengthen the partnership between veterans and their care-givers. On August 31, 2005, MHV delivered the Number 1 veteran-requested web service, as promised: Online Prescription Refill. Veteran response has been dramatic: Registration is up 187% since August (80,437 at end of August; 150, 485 at end of December). Over 300,000 prescription refills will be processed through My HealthVet by the time of this hearing. Usage statistics are increasing exponentially: it has taken just 15 weeks to go from 1 million to 2 million visits.

E-Government

During 2005, VA implemented an E-Government program office which exclusively focuses on E-Gov implementation across the Department. As a result, VA has made significant progress in the implementation of Federal E-Government initiatives, and VA's business processes are providing veterans and their families, employees, and stakeholders better access to VA programs.

During 2005, VA signed official agreements with several Federal agencies, provided funds, and committed to support a range of E-Government initiatives including GovBenefits; Integrated Acquisition Environment; E-Payroll; USA Services; E-Rulemaking; E-Training; E-Travel; E-Grants; E-Records Management; E-Authentication; E-Clearance; Enterprise Human Resource Integration; Recruitment One-Stop; Business Gateway; and the Financial Management, Human Resources, Grants, and Federal Health Architecture Lines of Business. The E-Loans initiative, in which VA was a partner, has been completed.

In support of the cross-cutting initiative, E-Authentication, VA is currently working with GSA to implement E-Authentication for a public-facing system. It will demonstrate the production deployment of forms and applications widely used by veterans applying for health services.

VA is also continuing actions to implement E-Rulemaking, E-Travel, and E-Payroll. For E-Rulemaking, public comments on VA regulations are being received via the E-Rulemaking initiative, and plans are to implement the Federal Document Management System in early 2006. For E-Travel, action to migrate to one of GSA's mandated E-Travel services continues. Federal Travel Regulations (FTR) require all Federal agencies to implement E-Travel services by September 30, 2006. For E-Payroll, VA is continuing efforts associated with the Administration's E-Payroll consolidation initiative which will reduce the number of payroll providers from 22 to 4. VA has entered into an agreement with the Defense Financial and Accounting Service to allow for the exchange of VA payroll/human resources data between the two agencies in order to consolidate VA's payroll services.

The Department's IT Oversight

As VA moves forward with implementation of the *One VA* Enterprise Architecture (EA), management of IT resources will continue to evolve and mature. Strong programs are being developed for cyber security, workforce development, performance metrics, and project management oversight. OI&T will bring enterprise-wide discipline and integration of telecommunications capability to increase security, performance, and value to VA and its customers. Command and control capabilities will be established and exercised to support the Department in times of emergency. Electronic Government will be expanded and Internet capabilities will be enhanced to improve the delivery of services and the sharing of knowledge for the benefit of veterans. All of these efforts will focus on meeting the objectives of the President's Management Agenda.

Managing the Department's IT programs and providing oversight of associated resources require a strong integrated IT management process to provide premier service to veterans. New and changing legislative requirements make it imperative that all VA administrations and staff offices plan IT initiatives collaboratively, under the auspices of a *One VA* EA, in order to achieve the best mix of business solutions and expenditure efficiencies for the Department.

In light of the legislative requirements to design and implement a process for selecting, managing and evaluating IT investments, OI&T established a business case for a *One VA* IT Enterprise Project Management Office (EPMO) initiative. EPMO is designed to improve and standardize the management and reporting of VA's IT portfolio. To accomplish this, a VA-wide set of portfolio and project management policies, processes, tools and training have been designed that will ensure a greater probability of achieving consistent repeatable project results. In addition, EPMO will help to ensure VA meets its legal and regulatory requirements, under the Clinger-Cohen Act, The Paperwork Reduction Act, and OMB Circulars A-11 and A-130.

IT Integrated Management Process (the "Integrated Process Flow")

Streamlining business practices and optimizing performance through the effective use of technology, OI&T has adopted an integrated process to manage the information technology portfolio. Starting with concept development and continuing through system production, deployment and total life cycle, this process will provide continuous oversight and evaluation through sound project management and disciplined milestone reviews.

There are six defined steps involved in the IT Integrated Management Process. They are:

Step 0 starts at project conception. Project managers develop a short paper that defines the mission of their respective projects. The mission definition explains what the project is intended to accomplish, the types of resources needed, and why the project should be undertaken. The mission paper is presented to the Executive Information Board (EIB). If the mission paper is approved by the EIB, the project manager will proceed to step 1 and expand the concept involved with the project.

Step 1 starts after the mission paper has been approved. Project managers develop abbreviated documentation for the project via a Concept Paper. The Concept Paper is reviewed and approved by the EIB and CIO. Approved projects will be allowed to continue. This approval constitutes "Milestone 0" in a project's life cycle. Projects which successfully complete Milestone 0 are provided funding that will allow the effort to get underway.

Step 2 involves the further development of the project's concept. Organizations will produce a "Planning Level" Exhibit 300 during this phase of the project life cycle. Approval of this document will provide a low level of funding that will allow an organization to do further planning through studies, limited test platforms, small prototypes, and similar approaches.

Using additional information gained from further study, the Planning Level Exhibit 300 is developed into a "Full Acquisition" Exhibit 300. The Full Acquisition Exhibit 300 contains all the details necessary to effectively execute the project. Organizations have the option to skip creation of a Planning Level 300 and proceed directly to development of a Full Acquisition Exhibit 300 if the nature of the project warrants accelerated funding. Completion of a Full Acquisition Exhibit 300 and its acceptance by the Office of Management and Budget constitutes successful completion of Milestone 1.

Step 3, system definition, begins upon approval of a Full Acquisition 300 at Milestone 1. Organizations will conduct full prototyping and create necessary system design documentation during this phase of the life cycle.

Step 4 occurs only after the CIO and EIB determine that the requirements of Step 3 have been fully satisfied at a Milestone 2 briefing. Step 4 begins the process of building the final solution envisioned by the project, including all modifications made up to that point. A Milestone 3 briefing before the CIO and EIB ends this phase of the life cycle. Success at this point provides the Department with a fully implemented and operational system.

During production, Step 5 in the system life cycle according to the IT Integrated Management Process, systems will continue to undergo review by the CIO and EIB to ensure initiatives are providing expected benefits and meet VA needs.

The IT Integrated Management Process, through its phased approach, allows problems to be identified early in the project life cycle when they are easier to correct. It also allows for identification during the early stages of development those projects which no longer meet the Department's needs. They can then be terminated before incurring excessive costs. In short, the IT Integrated Management Process provides the CIO and EIB with the means to accurately track the cost, schedule, and performance goals of all projects within the IT Portfolio. The process is also tightly linked to EA defined in Program Objective E.3.1.